MARRIAGE: State allows only heterosexual unions

FROM PAGE 1

The proposed amendment is a response to a recent court decision in Massachusetts that clears the way for same-sex marriages there. The mayor of San Francisco recently granted marriage licenses to thousands of same-sex couples.

Colorado law recognizes only marriages between a man and a woman.

"Some states have already started to change somewhat that definition," said Rep. Richard Decker, R-Fountain, who voted for the bill. "Those civil unions, or whatever they may be called, are a danger that may make their way to other states."

The 90-minute debate about the resolution sparked emotional rhetoric from lawmakers.

Rep. Lynn Hefley, R-Colorado Springs, wanted the resolution approved.

"Traditionally and historically, marriage means the union between a man and a woman," Hefley said. "Right now, our society is asking for many other types of unions calling themselves marriage. To me, that doesn't make sense.

"If we don't take a stand and step forward on what is marriage, our country is going to probably fall just like Rome did."

Rep. Gayle Berry, R-Grand Junction, said fear motivated the measure's supporters.

"My God loves all people and doesn't hate," she said.

CONTACT THE WRITER:
1-303-837-0613 or khenley@gazette.com

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

Contacts
CITY EDITOR: 636-0251 • INFORMATION: 636-0221
citydesk@gazette.com

GAZETTE.COM

ts at officer

"I support marriage as being between one man and one woman. But I do not believe the FMA belongs in the Constitution. The Constitution should serve as a document of rights and protections from government, not social policy."

REP. JOHN WITWER – R-Evergreen

Same-sex marriage ban loses in House

Proposal prompts emotional debate

By KYLE HENLEY
THE GAZETTE

DENVER • Colorado lawmakers sent a message Friday to Congress — a ban on same-sex marriages does not belong in the U.S. Constitution.

Members of the Colorado House voted 37-28 to defeat a resolution that would have backed the Federal Marriage Amendment, a proposed change to the Constitution that would forbid homosexuals from tying the knot.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The amendment is championed by Colorado Congresswoman Marilyn Musgrave, who represents the 6th Congressional District, and Sen. Wayne Allard, R-Colo.

"I support marriage as being between one man and one woman," said Rep. John Witwer, R-Evergreen. "But I do not believe the FMA belongs in the Constitution.

"The Constitution should serve as a document of rights and protections from government, not social policy."

House Joint Resolution 1013 was sponsored by Rep. Kevin Lundberg, R-Berthoud, who called the measure's defeat "a victory for those who would dismantle the institution of marriage."

SEE MARRIAGE • PAGE 2

HOW THEY VOTED

Lawmakers voted 37-28 to defeat House Resolution 1013, which would have called on Congress to support an amendment to the U.S. Constitution banning same-sex marriages.

Because lawmakers were voting on a procedural move, a no vote meant support for the ban; a yes vote meant opposition to the ban.

A look at how El Paso County lawmakers voted:

- Rep. Bill Cadman, R-Colorado Springs – NO
- Rep. Mark Cloer, R-Colorado Springs – NO
- Rep. Richard Decker, R-Fountain – NO
- Rep. Lynn Hefley, R-Colorado Springs – NO
- Rep. Keith King, R-Colorado Springs – NO
- Rep. Michael Merrifield, D-Manitou Springs – YES
- Rep. Dave Schultheis, R-Colorado Springs – NO
- Rep. Bill Sinclair, R-Colorado Springs – YES

Witwer, R-Evergreen. "But I do not believe the FMA belongs in the Constitution.

"The Constitution should serve as a document of rights and protections from government, not social policy."

House Joint Resolution 1013 was sponsored by Rep. Kevin Lundberg, R-Berthoud, who called the measure's defeat "a victory for those who would dismantle the institution of marriage."

SEE **MARRIAGE** • PAGE 2

HOW THEY VOTED

Lawmakers voted 37-28 to defeat House Resolution 1013, which would have called on Congress to support an amendment to the U.S. Constitution banning same-sex marriages.

Because lawmakers were voting on a procedural move, a no vote meant support for the ban; a yes vote meant opposition to the ban.

A look at how El Paso County lawmakers voted:

- Rep. Bill Cadman, R-Colorado Springs – NO
- Rep. Mark Cloer, R-Colorado Springs – NO
- Rep. Richard Decker, R-Fountain – NO
- Rep. Lynn Hefley, R-Colorado Springs – NO
- Rep. Keith King, R-Colorado Springs – NO
- Rep. Michael Merrifield, D-Manitou Springs – YES
- Rep. Dave Schultheis, R-Colorado Springs – NO
- Rep. Bill Sinclair, R-Colorado Springs – YES

Saturday, April 24, 2004

rejected

ment of Education would issue the checks directly to families.

Rep. Nancy Spence, R-Centennial, said that change would have allowed the voucher program to begin this fall.

"What I wanted to do was get kids in school this fall, and now that's not possible," Spencer said.

"Hopefully, the courts will find last year's legislation to be constitutional."

Some critics weren't sure

rejected

ment of Education would issue the checks directly to families.

Rep. Nancy Spence, R-Centennial, said that change would have allowed the voucher program to begin this fall.

"What I wanted to do was get kids in school this fall, and now that's not possible," Spence said.

"Hopefully, the courts will find last year's legislation to be constitutional."

Some critics weren't sure HB1442 would have eliminated constitutional questions about vouchers.

The state constitution, in several places, expressly prohibits the state from giving money directly to private or religious schools.

"If I were to take a wild guess, since the last one was challenged in court, this one will be as well," said Rep. Gayle Berry, R-Grand Junction, who called HB1442 "a financial shell game."

"I have some serious concerns about the funding mechanism," Berry said.

CONTACT THE WRITER:
1-303-837-0613 or
khenley@gazette.com

THE DOME

s from the Legislature

for lawmakers.

Owens has suggested taking a two-year time-out from Amendment 23 and TABOR. Legislation implementing that idea is alive in the General Assembly.

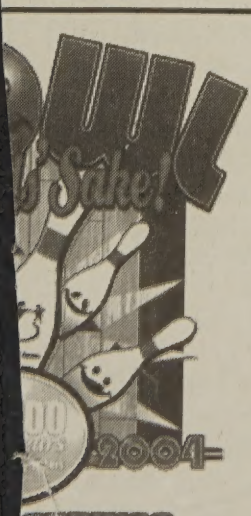
WATER DISTRICT GETS OK

The Senate gave preliminary approval to legislation that would allow small water providers on the Front Range to pool their resources and create a large water provider.

Senate Bill 232, set for a final vote early next week, would clear the way for small water districts in Arapahoe, Jefferson, Elbert, Douglas and El Paso counties to create an entity that would have the money to build water projects and provide water to fast-growing suburban areas.

OD EATS
hat's Cooking?
day. Food.

Gazette
gazette.com



to the 22nd Annual
Kids Sake
, May 1
re available from
1 a.m. - 1 p.m.,
p.m. - 5 p.m.,
p.m. - 9 p.m.